Successive Finance Ministers have assured that additional funds would be provided during the currency of the Financial Year, whenever needed. The allocation was enhanced to 45,694 crores in BE 1999-2000 which was further augmented by Rs. 3243.33 crores through a Supplementary voted in December 1999.

Shortage of Pilots in IAF

606. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the IAF's frontline squadrons based at Jodhpur are short of their sanctioned strength of pilots resulting in severe impact on the flight safety records;

(b) if so, what is the existing shortage of pilots as against the sanctioned strength stating the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to meet the shortage in the pilots strength?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) There is no shortage of pilots in the frontline squadrons based in Jodhpur or any other frontline base.

(b) In view of (a) above, does not rise.

(c) Sustained publicity efforts are on to attract talented youth in officers cadre in Indian Air Force.

Assistance provided to Defence Personnel

†607. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to Refer to answer to Unstarred Question 793 given in Rajya Sabha on the 8th December, 1999 and state:

(a) the details regarding the assistance provided by the Central Government to 524 defence personnel who were killed, together with the details of contribution of assistance made by each State separately in this regard;

(b) whether the eligible persons have since received the requisite assistance, as announced; and

(c) the measures taken for the rehabilitation of 1363 defence personnel who were injured ?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Liberalised family pension and gratuity as per the rules have been granted to the soldiers killed in Kargil operation. Besides, a comprehensive package has been worked out and implemented for the next of kin of all casualties of Kargil operation. Details of the package are as follows:—

Ex-gratia Grant

The widows/next of kin of the soldiers killed during Kargil operation were given ex-gratia amount @ Rs.10 lakhs. further, an ex-gratia @ Rs.30,000/- has been paid to them from the Army Central Welfare Fund.

Assistance from National Defence Fund (NDF)

The following assistance has been provided from the NDF:

Education Allowance

Rs. 1 lakh per child/Rs.2 lakhs per family.

Financial Assistance to Parents

Dependent parents of the deceased soldiers are to be paid monthly interest accruing from a fixed deposit of Rs. 1.20 lakhs.

Housing Grant

A sum of Rs. 5 lakhs has been given to all the war widows/NOK (in case the deceased defence personnel was a bachelor) and to those Defence personnel invalidated out of service due to war injuries/for construction/ acquisition of a dwelling unit or for renovation, modification/addition of the existing dwelling unit on the land provided by the State Government or on her/his own land.

Details of the assistance provided by the States to the next of kin of Kargil casualties, as per available information, are given in the Annexure. *[See appendix 189, Annexure No. 18]*

Families of all Kargil martyrs have been given financial and other benefits they are entitled to, on completion of necessary formalities.

As per information available, so far no injured soldier has been invalidated out of service. Therefore, the question of their rehabilitation does not arise.